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World History I

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Biography

The philosopher, Solomon Ibn Gabirol, was not only a philosopher but a poet as well. He was born around 1021 in Malaga, Spain (Solomon Ibn Gabirol). He was an orphan as a young boy due to the death of his father. He studied the [Talmud](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Talmud), Hebrew and Arabic, and [astronomy](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Astronomy), geometry and philosophy, and began to write poetry when he was sixteen(Mindel). One poem he wrote at this age was called, "Azharoth.” This poem was based on the Taryag commandments of the Torah which were six-hundred and thirteen commandments which were given by the lord in the Torah (Parsons). This was later included in the Shovuoth service of many congregations(Mindel).

Solomon Ibn Gabirol’s beliefs were a combination of three religions. These three religions were Jewish Kabbalah, Medieval Christian, and Sufism. Sufism was “a spiritual philosophy that cut across religious and geographic boundaries to bring together members of all three religions” (“Solomon Ibn Gabirol: A Jewish/Sufi”). He emphasized Divine Will as well as that all things, including soul and intellect, are based off of matter and form (Pessin).

Then at nineteen, Gabirol caught an unknown chronic illness which caused him to suffer from boils and left him in constant pain (“Solomon Ibn Gabirol”). When he was twenty, Gabirol wrote a piece called “*Anak”*, which was

“A versified Hebrew grammar, alphabetical and acrostic, consisted of four-hundred verses divided into ten parts. Ninety-five lines of this grammar have been preserved by Solomon Parḥon; in these Gabirol reproaches his townsmen with their neglect of the Hebrew language. Sometime after his mother’s death in 1045, Gabirol left Saragossa, possibly banished because of his criticism of prominent members of the Jewish community” (“Solomon Ibn Gabirol”).

His poetry helped to reflect his struggles throughout his life. Around 1058, Gabirol died in Valencia, Spain. No one truly knows how Gabirol died but there are theories. One theory was that “A [Muslim](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Muslim) poet, jealous of Gabirol's poetic gifts, killed him, and buried him beneath the roots of a [fig](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Fig) tree” (“Solomon Ibn Gabirol”). This odd theory caused for a search to take place for his remains. His remains were found and the murderer expiated his crime with his life. Another theory was that he was trampled to death by a horseman (“Solomon Ibn Gabirol”).

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